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SILVER STAR BIBLE SCHOOL 1999

HIS MIRACLES - BY MIRACLES AND WONDERS AND SIGNS

Speaker: Bro. Jim Cowie

Study #4: The Son of Man Coming in His kingdom

Reading: Matthew 16:13 - 17:5

Thanks bro. Jeff. Well, we come brethren and sisters to the consideration of the transfiguration of Christ. Now, let me just disabuse you immediately of what your expectations might have been, or should be.

If you have come thinking that you might go away with a better understanding of the scientific complexities of the transfiguration; if you think that I'm going to give you some answers as to what actually happened, the mechanics of how Christ was portrayed in glory upon the mountain, and how Elijah and Moses were there; whether Moses and Elijah were resurrected; and, all those sorts of issues which are usually things that we discuss when we come to talk about the transfiguration; then you will be sadly disappointed, because I will not be speaking about those things at all. That's not to say I don't have very firm views about them, as you might expect, I do have very firm views. I do believe it was a vision: chapter 17 verse 9 says, 'that as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them saying, tell the vision to no man; until the Son of man be risen again from the dead'. It was a vision but don't ask me to explain the mechanics of it; I think I know! but I think we'll also find when we do actually find out, in a better day, that it was so far in advance of our appreciation of the possible, that it would be impossible for us to understand it now. So, it's futile, I believe, to talk about those sorts of issues. It is certainly not futile to talk about why the transfiguration occurred and what its principles and lessons were; and we're going to be exploring those things in the course of the next three studies.

You might say to me, 'well, is the transfiguration really one of Christ's miracles? surely, you're getting off the track, and we'll never ask you back here again because you don't talk to your subject'. Well, I guess you could perhaps suggest that! that it wasn't a miracle performed by Christ, and yet there is a very important miracle attached to the transfiguration that is part of it, that is simply inseparable to it, and if you try and separate it you will understand that miracle. And it will constitute our final study this week, based upon Mark chapter 9 and the healing of the son of the father who came seeking help from the disciples while Christ and His three inner circle disciples were upon that mountain. So, there is a miracle of Christ involved here! But let me just say

this, b&s and young people, that of all the miracles that the apostle Peter observed, as he followed our Lord for 42 months, the one that stuck in his mind as being preeminent above all the grand things that he had seen, far above the resurrection of dead people, the giving of sight to the blind, the unstopping of the ears of the deaf, and of all the ailments that had been cured in his presence; of all the things that he had seen, the one thing that was stamped indelibly upon his mind, that he never forgot and could never forget, and which convinced him that he had not, and that we had not, followed cunningly devised fables, was the transfiguration of Christ.

You turn with me to 2 Peter and chapter 1, Peter himself is about to pass from the scene. He's about to experience his exodus (and I'm sure that most of you are familiar with this context), from verse 15, 'Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease, to have these things always in remembrance'. The word 'decease' we know is the Greek word 'exodos' (1841), and if you have the same margin in your bible as I have in mine, you will see that the first reference in the centre margin is Luke chapter 9 and verse 31; and, you will remember that that's the record which tells us that Moses and Elijah were there on the mountain with our Lord Jesus Christ, and they were discussing His exodus, which He would accomplish at Jerusalem. So, that particular word had stuck in the mind of Peter, and now as he speaks of his own departure, his going out, he tries to stir up the brethren with a memory, an indelible memory; verse 16, 'For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the 'dunamis' (1411- 'the power') and the 'parousia' (3952 - 'the being near', 'the advent' or 'the presence') of our Lord Jesus Christ'.

Can you get, b&s, the spirit of those words? Peter had stood at the second coming of Christ, and more than that, he had gone beyond the judgment seat and beheld Christ in glory, as He will be seen in the kingdom age in the presence of His glorified brethren, of whom Moses and Elijah are a type, as we shall see! He had been there at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, for he had been an eye-witness of His majesty as He will be in the kingdom age: 'For He received, (he said in verse 17), from God the Father, honour and glory (more about that phrase a bit later on) when there came such a voice to Him, from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount'. Now, I'll make a statement here which many of you will accept, some perhaps may not have heard it before, but we're going to learn as we consider the transfiguration of Christ, that the most important thing about that great event, was not the event itself; it was not the majesty that was revealed to the three disciples; it was not the overwhelming glory which made them cower awe-struck in the presence of Christ and Moses and Elijah, and which addled the mind of Peter so that he did not know what he was saying. It was not the manifestation of raw power, the brilliance of the divine countenance, and all of those things which could be put into the basket of miracles that was important. There was one thing that was important, just one thing, and Peter adverts to it in verse 17 when he says, 'there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, and mentions it again in verse 18 and says, 'and this voice which came from heaven we heard', and the last words that our bro. Tim read for us from Matthew

17 and verse 5 this morning, b&s, you might remember: for that voice said, 'this is My Son the beloved (to use the Greek) hear Him'. And there was the critical element of the transfiguration, the only reason for the manifestation of the glory, for the miracle involved was to gain the attention. And once the attention had been gained, then comes the most important process, the moulding of minds, the changing of the way that we think, the development of understanding and comprehension, and Peter himself had to go through that process. Now, there's a lot more to be said about 2 Peter chapter 1, but I'm going to halt it there, because it may be that I won't get to the point I want to get to in this session this morning. This is a foundation session for the transfiguration; we may not get as far as I would like to get. If we leave you sort of like hanging over the precipice at the end of this session, then somehow you'll just have to switch off the next 24 hours until we get back here again and we can start at that point. But we will come back in due time, God willing, to 2 Peter chapter 1, and we will see that this principle which emerges from the transfiguration undergirds the second epistle of Peter.

Now, let me make another bold statement! I'm starting to be pretty good at this! if the transfiguration undergirds the second epistle of Peter, then it's quite possible that the same event, and its surrounding events, undergird the first epistle of Peter. Well, you might say, that's a possibility! but it's true, and I'm going to demonstrate that in this session this morning. It's true, and we need to come back to Matthew chapter 16 to explore that. What an awesome time it was for the disciples to march with our Lord Jesus Christ to the north of the Land, to pass the city of Dan, and to come to Pnias, where the water flows from beneath the mountain and gushes forth. To the north above them stood the towering eminence of Mount Hermon, 3,000 metres plus, (9,000 feet for those of us like me who are a little older); 9,000 feet standing as the head of that Land. Here they were at Caesarea Philippi, verse 13 of Matthew 16, and the Lord came here to pray as the record of Luke chapter 9 indicates; He came here to pray, He came here to be strengthened, as we come to a mountaintop, b&s, to be strengthened.

And He asked His disciples a leading question, (now for those of you who want additional proof that the title 'the Son of man' refers to Christ's divinely delegated authority to exercise dominion over all carnal things, you will not get a much better place than this to cement that idea). He asked them in verse 13, 'Whom do (and there's an article here) the men say that I the Son of man am?' And they said, 'Some think you are John the Baptist, others say you are Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He said to them, alright, but who do you think that I am?' And the ever present Peter, always quick off the mark says, (and you'll notice it calls him, Simon Peter, the name 'Simon' means 'hearing' (4613)(8095), the hearing rock) said, 'Thou art the Messiah, the Son of the living God'. You're exactly right, Peter, that's who the Son of man is! and if you would like to highlight that phrase, the Son of man, you'll find it not only in verse 13, but you'll find it over in verse 27, and look at verse 27: 'For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father'. Verse 28 the last two lines, 'till they see the Son of man coming in His kingdom.' Chapter 17 verse 9, 'Tell the vision to no man until the Son of man be risen again from the dead'. Is there one reference there that highlights His humanity?

So, you see, that's just an additional proof to us, that when you meet that title, you're in the presence of a divinely delegated man who has come to exercise dominion, not only now but on the Sabbath day; and, He's about to enter the Sabbath day, as it were, in the events of the transfiguration, because they represent what is going to happen in the kingdom. So, we go on in verse 17 of Matthew chapter 16, 'And Jesus answered and said unto him, blessed art thou (now I want you to notice the name that is used), blessed art thou Simon (hearing) Bar-jona (920 + 3123 - son of Jonah): for flesh and blood has not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which art in heaven'. Now, it's just interesting isn't it? that this chapter had begun with the Lord in debate. Verse 1 says the 'Pharisees and Sadducees tempted Him and asked Him a sign', and He refused and He said, 'you can tell what the weather's going to be like, you hypocrites, but you cannot read the signs of the times'. And in verse 4 He says, 'A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah; and He left them and departed'. There's only one sign given to you, and you won't understand it anyway, it is the sign of the prophet Jonah. Now, elsewhere we are told that Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a fish; and then he was spat out upon the land. In other words, there was the suffering of death and a resurrection to a newness of life; now, that's the context in which we find ourselves here, b&s, and that's why the Lord uses the term, Simon, son of Jonah. We need to keep that in mind because in a moment you're going to see the relevance of that, not only here but elsewhere.

Here is the hearing rock who is now the son of Jonah and flesh and blood had not revealed this unto him, and so Christ adds in verse 18 these words, 'And I say unto thee, that thou art Peter (a rock, a moveable rock - 4074) and upon this rock, (an immoveable rock), I will build My ecclesia'. In other words, He was going to build His ecclesia upon, not Peter who proves himself to be very moveable as we shall see in a moment, but upon the immoveable rock of the statement that Peter had made: that, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God'. And when people believe that, b&s, when they believe that Christ died and rose again, and they are absolutely convinced that there is a risen, glorified Christ at the right hand of God who will one day come and bring the substance of what was seen by the three disciples on that mountain, and they themselves will stand in His presence to receive of the glory, the reward that He has for those who are faithful, when they believe that, God is in the process of building His ecclesia.

That's what He's saying there! but I want you to notice something in verse 18: He then says, 'And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it'; and, two quotations are made here from one of the prophets. You remember back in verse 14, 'they say you're one of the prophets'; well, He quotes from one of the prophets. Do you know which one? twice! the prophet Isaiah whose name just happens to mean 'the salvation of Yah', and He quotes prophecies concerning Himself. See the first one in verse 18, if you have the Oxford bible you will see it has a reference to Isaiah 38 verse 10 (but don't turn it up just yet, we'll go there in a minute); there's a second one here, also quoted from Isaiah,

verse 19, 'And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be that which is found in heaven (have you noticed what I've done with that?) and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be that which is loosed in heaven'. In other words, Peter and those who were with him, were to use the keys of the kingdom, were to do so in complete harmony with the will of heaven. Now, where do those words come from? Well, again, if you have the Oxford bible you will notice that in the margin for the phrase 'the keys of the kingdom', there's a reference to Isaiah 22 and verse 22. But, before we go back there, b&s, let me just make this statement; (not as a proof just yet, but just accept this statement), the two keys that were given to Peter were, the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. As I said, don't worry about that just at this stage; in fact, I will just cover up some of these words.

The sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow: I want you to come back to Isaiah 38, where we have the record of the suffering servant of Yahweh; his name was Hezekiah. Have you ever asked yourself why there's a historical account repeated for the third time? we have it in Kings, we have it in Chronicles, we have it in Isaiah; why is the historical account of Hezekiah repeated for us in the prophecy of Isaiah? Well, of course, it precedes the servant prophecy which begins in chapter 40 and, therefore, it is there to lay the foundations for the servant prophecies; and, Hezekiah is portrayed as the suffering servant of Yahweh. He is there as a type of Christ: his visage was marred more than any other man; it is quite likely that his father put him through the fires of the worship of the false gods, in the valley of the son of Hinnom (or 'mourning' as the word means); that Hezekiah had been offered up to Molech, that he had gone through the flames and his face was a mess (which is probably the reason why he had chosen not to marry, didn't want a wife looking into his face, with a face like that!); visage was marred more than any other man Here he is, and he came to the point of death; he was a dead man. Isaiah turned upon his heels and walked out, 'you're a dead man', and there was a resurrection to life and 15 years added to his days. And he says this in Isaiah 38 (verse 9 for connection), 'The writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness: I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave' (there's the phrase that's picked up our Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 16, the gates of hell, the gates of the grave shall not prevail against it), I said I shall go to the gates of the grave; I am deprived of the residue of my years'. But, of course, we know that he was raised from the dead, and in his days another man was given the keys of the kingdom. In this same crisis, as the Assyrian was outside the walls and Hezekiah was incapable of ruling his people because he was about to die, the kingdom was in the hands of a man who was unfaithful, who was digging his own grave, he had no faith that God could deliver them from the hand of the Assyrian, and because of that he was sacked from his job! And that's the record of Isaiah 22, isn't it? that's the other passage that Christ is quoting in Matthew chapter 16.

Isaiah 22, without going into all the surrounding context, I've just given you a brief summary, we come to verse 15 of Isaiah 22: 'Thus saith Adonai Yahweh of armies, Go, get thee unto this treasurer, even unto Shebna, which is over the house', (while Hezekiah was sick), and says, 'why have you been hewing out a sepulchre for yourself?

you've lost your job, you'll be carried away captive with all that belongs to you'. But, read verse 20, 'And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim (his name means 'he shall set up', 471 + 410, 6965, and God was about to set up this man as a type of our Lord) the son of Hilkiah: and I will clothe him with thy robe (Shebna's robe), and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. And the key of the house of David, (the house of David is the kingdom, isn't it? these are the keys of the kingdom), and the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder:' (now look at these words, these are alluded to, if not quoted by Christ in Matthew chapter 16), 'so he shall open, and none shall shut, and he shall shut, and none shall open', ('that which thou shalt bind on earth, shall be that which shall be bound in heaven'). No man shall do the opposite to what heaven does! Verse 23, 'And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house'. That's sufficient, b&s, twice in this passage there's reference to the glory of his father: in chapter 38 verse 10, the gates of hell is in the context of the suffering servant of the sufferings of Hezekiah, he's about to die - there are the sufferings of Christ. But, the context of Isaiah 22 is of the glory to be given to him together with the key of the kingdom; it was the glory that should follow. So, the two keys of the kingdom are referred to by Christ in Matthew chapter 16, in those two verses 18 and 19.

Now, if you're not convinced about that, perhaps we need to take you a bit further, and have a look at the words of Simon Bar-jona in his first epistle. I want you to come with me to 1 Peter chapter 1. Now, I don't want to treat adults as school students, but if you want to do yourself a favour, take out two highlighting pens if you have them. I used a red one for the sufferings of Christ, and a green one (which is the biblical colour for eternal life, immortality) for the glory that should follow; and, I highlighted just a few brief words through the first of Peter. I want you to follow me, even if you don't do this, could I suggest that you take down the references and do it at another time. As I said, the events of the transfiguration, at least the events leading up to it, undergird the first of Peter.

Now, let me just remind you of what the first of Peter is about. It was written in the days of Nero, emperor of Rome, who came to the throne at age 17, reigned for 14 terrible years, during which he slaughtered and massacred many people, including many of our brethren and sisters, by the most heinous methods; such as, tarring them with tar, shoving them alive onto a sharpened pole, putting them in his backyard and lighting them up to use them as lamps while he rode around his backyard in his chariot, practising his skills; and, if that wasn't sufficient variety for him, he would take them and tie them up, sew them up into the skins of newly killed animals, with the blood on the outside and the fur on the inside, and roll them out into the midst of the Coliseum and other places where they would be torn to shreds by wild beasts that had been starved for weeks; and, there were many other variations on the theme that Nero, this 17 year old plus emperor, did to our brethren and sisters. They were suffering trials such as we have never had to face, fiery trials Peter says in chapter 1 verse 7, that would try their

faith. That's the context of the first of Peter, of the suffering brethren of the first century between the years AD 56 and 68.

Brethren and sisters, there had to be, didn't there? there had to be something very substantial undergirding such an epistle! And, that's why you read in 1 Peter chapter 1, 'of the salvation, verse 10, 'which the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ (and we've seen that in Isaiah) which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ (key #1) and the glory that should follow' (key #2). Now, the words that I've highlighted are just those words that you can see there on the transparency; the sufferings of Christ in red, the glory that should follow in green. You do as you please, but I would suggest to you that it may just assist your reading of the first epistle of Peter in the future to know, where it's based upon.

Now, you follow me: let's go back a bit earlier in chapter 1, to verse 2, towards the end of the verse where he says, 'unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ'; that's akin to the phrase, 'the sufferings of Jesus Christ', isn't it? Verses 3 and 4 towards the end, 'unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away', (that's the glory that would follow). Turn the page with me to chapter 1 verse 19, he says, 'that we are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ' (there's the sufferings of Christ). And, verse 21, 'Who by Him do believe in God that raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory (there's the glory that would follow). Do you see how these two ideas are locked together in a context? Well, let's keep going, chapter 3 verse 18 in the same verse, 'For Christ also hath once suffered for sins (there's the sufferings of Christ) 'the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit' (given immortality by the Spirit - there's the glory that would follow); and, if you want to add to that glory, look at verses 21 and 22, particularly the latter, where it spells out what that glory represented: 'at the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him'. Take chapter 4 and verse 1, 'Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered' (that's all I need, there's the sufferings of Christ). Have a look at the balance of that in verse 11 towards the end of the verse: 'that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ' (that's the reason He suffered that there might be glory, not just for Himself but for others in Him). Look at verse 13 of chapter 4, 'But rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings'. (Now, is this coincidence, b&s? is it possible to conceive that Peter is using this terminology over and over again and linking it with the glory because it is just a useful phrase to use? or, is he actually using the two keys of the kingdom?) Verse 13, 'Ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy'. And, finally in chapter 5 and verse 1, 'The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed'.

There, b&s and young people, is a very efficient, beautiful, wonderful use of the two

keys of the kingdom. Peter got to use these keys twice before this time. Doubtless, he and the apostles used them frequently, but let's have a look very quickly at the two occasions on which Peter, who was given this privilege to use the keys first, when he used them to both Jew and Gentile. Now, you are familiar with these contexts, as we say in our transparency, Acts chapter 2, it's the first of them. All I want to do is just highlight a couple of phrases in Acts chapter 2, at the beginning of his speech in verse 14, and he gets down to verse 23 and he talks about Him (Jesus) 'being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, Him have ye taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death (that's the sufferings of Christ) because it was not possible that He should be holden of it'. So, in verses 23 and 24, there are phrases used there which represent the keys of the kingdom: the sufferings of Christ and the glory that would follow. And, if you read on, of course, the glory is expanded. He is called now both Lord and Christ, at the right hand of God exalted, in verse 33, etc.

But, have a look at Acts chapter 10. (Now!, memories!) 'Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona' (son of Jonah!). What was Jonah noted for, b&s? his reluctance to preach to the Gentiles, wasn't he? Where did he go to escape the responsibility? Joppa! Where was Peter when the messengers of Cornelius, the Italian, came to the house of one Simon, a tanner? he was at Joppa. Was Peter ready, was he ready to preach to the Gentiles? answer: NO! He had very effectively used the two keys of the kingdom to the Jews, but he was reluctant to use them for the Gentiles, and his response in verse 14, when he sees the sheet which is lowered to him while he's in a trance in the middle of the day upon the top of the house, (a sheet full of unclean animals under the Law), his response, when the call comes to him from Christ, 'to rise Peter, kill and eat', is verse 14 of Acts chapter 10: 'Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean'. Where have you heard words like that before, b&s? I'll tell you: for when Christ had said to Peter, 'here, Peter, are the two keys of the kingdom' and then said to His disciples, 'the Son of man is going to have to go up to Jerusalem and there be crucified and lay in the grave for three days and three nights like Jonah'; Peter got a hold of the Lord and said, 'Not so Lord; this should not be unto Thee!' In other words, Peter was not prepared to use the first key. He wasn't prepared to use the first key because he didn't understand the need for the sufferings of Christ before the glory. And, now it becomes time to use both keys His understanding is much improved now, but it is still deficient, for he is reluctant to use those keys for Gentiles, and like Jonah he has run away, as it were, from his responsibilities. And, here at Joppa, he has to be taught singly that his understanding is yet deficient: he is greatly humbled, humbled not only by the events, b&s, but by the genuineness of Cornelius when he confronts him in his house. Can you imagine what it was like for the chastised Peter to make that journey? But, when he gets there, this is what he says, in Acts chapter 10 and verse 39, (have you noticed this term 'witnesses' keeps on occurring? he's spoken about Jesus Christ who went about doing good in the previous verses); and at verse 39 he says to Cornelius and his family, 'and we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem: whom they slew and hanged on a tree (the sufferings of Christ). Him God raised up the third day, and showed Him openly' (as an



immortal being ,the glory that should follow). So, Peter uses the 2 keys and the minds of men were unlocked, as it were, and access was made for them to obtain the kingdom of God.

Now, come back to Matthew 16; if what we've said is correct, then it ought to stand the test of context. Don't take my word for it, b&s, just read carefully; as we said, keys provide access, but only if used in the correct manner, and Peter had a few things to learn, as did the other disciples. Look at the context of Matthew 16, now from verse 21, 'From that time forth began Jesus to show unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, (killed, He's suffering and He's killed, the sufferings of Christ), and be raised again the third day (there's the glory that would follow). Then Peter took Him, and began to rebuke Him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee'.

That's a natural reaction, b&s. If you asked me how you could get into the kingdom of God, if you gave me a choice, I would say: 'I would like an armchair ride to the kingdom. I'll go first class, thank you very much' (you can put your seat back and your feet up, it would be lovely; but I'm used to going economy class where you suffer with the rest of the multitude in the back of the plane). You've got the point haven't you? if I had my choice, if I had to write the prescription of how to get into the kingdom, I would say, 'well, I wouldn't mind a million dollars, that would be good, (I could be like Uncle Bart! sorry can you erase that from the tape)', but you know what I mean, we would write a very easy prescription; but it's not to be, is it? There is a divine prescription: the cross must come before the crown; the sufferings before the glory. You're suffering, and no genuine servant of Christ is without suffering. If we identify ourselves with Him, we are endeavouring to put the flesh down every day, and the struggle is violent: 'crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts; if any man will come after Me, let him take up his cross daily and follow Me!' Is that an easy prescription? All about the sufferings of Christ, that's what He means you see, when He goes on after having rebuked Peter in verse 23, 'Get behind Me, Satan'. You see, the things that Peter is saying here are not the things of verse 19, are they?

'Peter, here are the keys to the kingdom, and whatsoever you bind on earth shall be that which is bound in heaven'; and, in other words, you've got to do it according to a divine prescription. And, immediately', (isn't Peter so typical of ourselves, b&s? we are blundering idiots sometimes, aren't we? I know I am, I'm a blundering idiot, you open your mouth and say something like I just said a little while ago, and you pay for it for the rest of your life! That's what we're like. Peter, this genuine man, genuine to the core, he had foot-and-mouth disease, didn't he? he's always putting his foot in his mouth; but that might portray the fact that he wore his heart on his sleeve, that what you saw is what you got, and what you got was a simple-minded man who was still learning, and he went on learning like you and I go on learning.), and, he says, 'Oh, no, this won't happen to you, Lord'. 'You are not speaking according to that which is bound in heaven, Peter. Get behind Me!' Now, I don't know about you, but when I'm rebuked by my brethren, sometimes even by my wife, I wouldn't describe the feeling that I feel in my

heart (if I can use that term of the deeper part of the mind, where character is formed), I wouldn't describe my feelings as being extremely comfortable; as a matter of fact, I would suggest that they are very agitated, and sometimes I feel so smitten by the rebuke, that it's very hard to function. Is that your experience?

What an enormous privilege it was to be handed the keys, and then, what a blow to be told, 'get behind Me', because your mind is not thinking in accordance with the qualities of the keys! Sufferings first, Peter, then glory! that's the principle!

Verse 24, 'Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross'. Now, the phrase 'take up his cross' is balanced in verse 27 by these words, 'For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works'. So, you've got the balance, take up his cross is the sufferings of Christ, that's the one, first essential key, without that you don't get the second one! but, if your life is a life of self denial, crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts, you can get the reward, the glory that will follow. You see the same idea's in verse 25, 'for whosoever will save his life shall lose it'. 'Saving it', of course, means living it for the present; if you live for the present, you lose it for ever, but if you lose it for the present, that is by denying yourself and taking up your cross and doing something which is the antithesis of the way the flesh wants to operate, then you will gain it forever. See that? lose life, that's the sufferings of Christ; but finding life, is the glory that will follow. So you see, b&s, it is an inflexible principle, isn't it, in this context? The cross must come before the crown! And, the man who is rebuked (and) must have been red-faced, so red-faced that he could hardly show his face among the disciples: he's just been told, 'get behind Me'; he's then told in verse 28, as the Lord looks at his face and looks into his eyes, and then glances to James and John, 'before the week is out, Peter, before the week is out, you and two others, (He uses the words, 'some of you standing here', He means Peter, James and John), you're going to see me in the kingdom. And I'm telling you, I'm telling you by that, that when I actually come in my kingdom, we're going to be there.' Talk about (what do they call them over here?) roller coasters! yeah! the good old roller coaster: give us the keys to the kingdom! get behind Me! you'll be in the kingdom!

I don't know about you, b&s, but that's my life; I'm the biggest yo-yo you ever saw: I am, I am up and down like hill and dale. One day I'm riding on the crests of the mountains, I'm in the chariot of the high places, and the next day my spirit's in the gutter because of my own folly, stupidity, lack of understanding, weakness, and all too often, feebleness of faith. Are you like that? Well, it doesn't do you any harm to come to a mountain and behold the glories of Yahweh, does it?

And impressed upon Peter's mind indelibly was what he saw in a week's time. And chapter 17 verse 1 says, 'And after 6 days Jesus taketh Peter, James and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain' (we believe, certainly I believe, it was Mount Hermon just to the north of them) and there, b&s, the record says 'He was transfigured' ('metamorphoo' - 3339, 'changed', 'transformed') into the shape, form and glory, as it were, that He'll be seen in the kingdom by you and me, in the company of

Peter, James and John. But, you're all aware that there's some discrepancy in the dating, isn't there? Matthew 17 verse 1 says, 'After 6 days; Mark 9 verse 2 says, 'after 6 days'; but, Luke 9 verse 28 says, 'and it came to pass in about 8 days after these sayings'. Matthew and Mark use the exclusive dating method (that is they don't include part days on either end of these events, and there's a reason for that, they are interested in setting forth something that is prophetic; but Luke, being the precise historian that he was, when the Spirit records through him, he gives the exact time, though he does say, 'and it came to pass about 8 days after these sayings', because, of course, it was part way through one day, and then there were six days in between, and part way through another day. So, you see, there's a difference, a real difference between the records, why? We suggest that the '6 days' prefigure the 6,000 year history of man before the Apocalypse of Christ in glory, because the events we read of here, are as we said, the coming of the kingdom; and, the '8 days' points forward to the culmination of this, in the time beyond the millennium, the 8th day when all shall be perfection and every single person upon the face of the earth will be like Christ was, and like Elijah and Moses were on that occasion, in glory. That's where it's heading. So, there's a reason we believe for that 'so-called' discrepancy in dates.

Now, what about the context of this transfiguration. Let's just see if we can get a few details because this is suppose to be a platform session, and I'm no where near where I'm suppose to be! Here's the context in which the transfiguration occurs.

1. The kingdom comes - Matthew 16 verse 28: that's what he says, 'there will be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in His kingdom'. A week later he did.
2. It's the time of the apocalypse of Christ - Matthew 17 verse 2: He was transformed before them; His face shone as the sun; His garments shone with brilliant whiteness.
3. It's the time of the resurrection of the dead - have a look at verses 6 and 7 of Matthew 17: 'And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and where sore afraid.' 'Fall on your face', that's what you do when you die. Jesus came and touched them, (as He will call for the dead, as it were), and touched them, and said, 'arise, and be not afraid'; it's the time of resurrection.
4. It's the time when the saints appear in glory - verse 3 of chapter 17: 'And behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elijah talking with Him'. Luke says they were there with Him in glory, in other words, they were there presented as immortal.
5. It's the time when Elijah comes and restores all things in relation to Israel - look at verse 11 of chapter 17: 'And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elijah truly will first come and restore all things'.
6. It's a time when a great mountain is removed - have a look at Matthew 17 verse 20: 'Jesus said to them, Because of your unbelief you cannot do this; for verily I say unto you, if ye have faith like a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain'. 'This

mountain', what mountain? well, the mountain that He'd just been transfigured on, Mount Hermon, the greatest mountain in the Land; it's a huge mountain, it's the mountain of Zechariah chapter 4 verse 7 which stands between Christ and the kingdom, which He has to remove, that mountain has got to be levelled like a plain, says Zechariah, before the kingdom can be established. It is the mountain of the apostasy and its adherents, the nations who support it.

7. It's the time when a so-called lunatic is cured - the boy, verse 14 through 18: we have the story of the cure of this so-called lunatic in verse 15, who oftentimes fell into the fire and into the water. And, if you read Isaiah 43 verse 2, that's exactly the language used of Israel's dispersion, passing through the fire and through the water. And Israel through Elijah's work is saved out of the fire and the water of the nations.

8, It's the time of the mustard seed - recall verse 20: 'faith as a grain of mustard seed', which Christ uses in His parable of His universal kingdom.

So, all of those things give us the framework of the transfiguration. This, b&s, was all about the coming of the kingdom and, moreover, when you look at the participants here, who see that everybody is adequately represented. Everyone is represented because it is the kingdom it has to involve everybody, doesn't it? The Son of man is coming in His glory, so you see Christ who is the King-Priest in glory and honour. Remember those words? (I can't do them today, but tomorrow, God willing, I will show you that that phrase is used in the Old Testament of the high priest's garments). He comes as a King-Priest in glory and honour.

There's Moses there, he died and was buried; he represents the glorified saints (and you know, Moses' grave was only known to God), and the graves of all our brethren and sisters who have died in Christ are known to God. I don't know where you've buried your dead, but God does. So, Moses represents the saints who enter the kingdom through resurrection from the dead. What about Elijah? well, we don't know what happened to him. I believe he died, but that doesn't matter, we don't know what happened to him, he was taken away. Elijah represents the saints who enter the kingdom by translation, that is, they are picked up while they are alive and remain, and they are taken to the presence of Christ. There are 3 disciples on that mountain who see this: now, while Christ, Moses, and Elijah are there in glory, the 3 disciples are very much mortal; and those 3 disciples, I believe, represent the mortal Jews who see the glory revealed first in Zion. When Christ and His saints come to Zion it will be the purified 1/3 of Jewry, Judah, His own tribe that will see Him first. But, the other disciples, the other 9 are down the mountain at the bottom amongst the multitude. The other band of disciples represent Israel outside the Land waiting to come into the presence of the Messiah through the work of Elijah. While the multitude, amongst whom is this lunatic, represent the mortal nations who seek Christ. So, b&s, you can see that everyone is there. We are all represented on this occasion.

My time is gone, but I want to ask you a question. You can think about this overnight: Why are Moses and Elijah at the transfiguration, and not David or Abraham or Joseph

or any other of the mighties of the past? Why Moses and Elijah? The normal response is this, 'Well, Moses represented the Law and Elijah the prophets'. Okay, fine! 'Well, Moses was the leader of the first exodus and Elijah is the leader of the second and Christ was there speaking with them about His exodus'. That's not bad! Or, where there more important reasons? Answer?